

CITY OF GREENBELT ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Tuesday, May 24, 2011

PRESENT: ACE Members: Susan Breon, Alla Lake, Janet Mirsky, Don Rich, Sudanshu Sinha, Dave Whiteman and Staff Liaison Wendy Wexler. City Council Member Leta Mach was also present.

Minutes of April 26, 2011 were accepted as is.

ACE STUDENT AWARDS RECAP.

Everyone was pleased with the evening, the attendance, the hosting and the participation. There was some discussion about the students standing behind the podium while the narrative about them was read, as it made viewing them difficult for the audience. It was a very accomplished group of students.

MUSIC FESTIVAL.

Dave did a wonderful job of organizing this in a new setting this year. There was a suggestion of making the presentation of the performance a bit more formal in the future by clearer announcing of the pieces and dignitaries, and perhaps more signs. Dave reports that just yesterday there was a meeting for advanced planning for concerts for the next school year. He says there should be four cluster concerts. Most will take place at ERHS. The third one of the year will be what was the ACE Music Festival, and will again be at GMS. Dave is very pleased at the ownership all the music directors are taking for managing this event. Many kudos for his leadership and such advanced planning and organization.

MATH CONTEST - UPDATE.

Susan reports that there has continued to be difficulties getting the participating schools to communicate with one another. The plan is to re-group for next school year. Perhaps the time of the year has been a part of the problem, so Susan is considering looking into using early November as a target time.

Considering the evolution of the Music Festival, it is thought that the first year of this competition there should be more hands-on involvement from ACE, with the hopes that later on the schools will better be able to operate the format on their own. It is suggested that we again discuss this at our June ACE meeting. Dave suggests contacting Dave Zahren who hosts a Science Bowl with a "Jeopardy like format" on the local County Cable TV and see if he might offer some assistance.

GMS CONSTRUCTION.

We review the current building status and it is reported to be 18.3% completed. A completion date of August 2012 is still on track.

GMS TASK FORCE.

Janet reports that a speaker from the Franklin Park Apartment complex came to the last GMS Task Force meeting and reported that there had been 280 evictions so far as a result of identifying criminal activity – most of them being drug or gang related. She also said that income requirements had been raised from \$30,000 annually to \$50,000. As a result, once a lease comes up for renewal, a family must meet the new income requirements. If they do not, they are evicted. If they do, they are moved to a newly renovated apartment so that the one they are living in can be worked on. Currently, they are renovating 85 to 100 apartments per month. There are a total of 2877 apartments and they are expected to have completed this renovation in 2012. The development company is marketing the apartments to military, graduate students, hospitals, police departments, teachers and fire departments. They also report that they are completely caught up on the maintenance back log.

Janet went on to discuss the options that are being considered for the historic section of the old GMS that will remain. She says that the PGCPs has \$6 million in the budget to renovate the historic section. The School Board has not yet officially released the building. There are a variety of options and organizations that are interested in the facility. A preliminary report will be sent to City Council from the Task Force in June.

GRANT WRITING WORKSHOP.

Jon informed ACE that Emmet Jordan has once again graciously agreed to conduct this workshop. Jon again believes that best time to do so would be right after Labor Day – as it was last year. We will ask the Greenbelt Community Foundation if they would like to co-sponsor it again. ACE members think it is important to notify all prior grant applicants (whether successful or not) to invite them to this event. They wonder if Jon has their email addresses. They also think all school principals and PTA's should be notified. Notice should be put in the News Review. Jon handled that last year and ACE asks if he will again.

A suggestion is made that it might be useful at the workshop to illustrate a successful grant and an unsuccessful one.

ACE members request this discussion be continued at the June meeting.

LABOR DAY PARADE PREP.

The Labor Day parade will be on Monday, September 5. Susan volunteers to be the "point person" for this event this year. Alla will complete the Parade application as she has done in the past. Wendy will send out the invitations to

march to all the ACE Award winners – both Educators and Students – and the follow up reminders. She will compile all the responses and get that list to Susan. Susan will take the banner and we will further discuss the meeting point at our June meeting. ACE members think we can do the parade without the “school bus” wagon – as that logistic seems a bit more difficult to arrange. Everyone agrees to wear their purple shirt! We are seeking additional ACE marchers to commit to participation. So far, Dave, Alla and Don all hope to be there. Please check your calendars!

ACE SCIENCE AND READING CLUBS.

ACE members discuss the attendance numbers and voice their concerns. They are specifically seeking ways to increase the Science Club attendance as it is easily accessible to the public and we want to maximize its usage. One variable is location. General consensus is to go back to one location – the Greenbelt Community Center. A discussion takes place about the ups and downs of both locations with special input from ACE members who have attended both and had important information to share about the access. Another variable is marketing and publicizing. Alla suggests getting a front page story with pictures in the News Review. Susan strongly suggests ACE School Liaisons should reach out to their school science teachers via school principals and arrange for teachers to offer one homework pass or extra credit for attendance. Dave suggests getting Jacob to attend PTA meetings to put on a mini science club as a way of better informing parents and spreading interest to students who will attend those meetings. Wendy will contact Jacob and see if he would be willing to participate with that plan.

It is suggested that ACE send a Report to Council about the concerns about the attendance numbers, the difficulty with the facility and the plans for trying one more year with some renewed attention to the Science Club. The changes would include having only one science club meeting a month and by increased publicity and marketing as listed above. Susan volunteers to write up the report.

ACE also discussed the ACE Reading Club, as led by Bonnie at the Springhill Lake Elementary School. It was agreed that she has been doing a good job and the numbers have steadily increased as the year went on. Bonnie has already voiced her enjoyment in running the club and has asked to continue it next year. Although ACE members wish they were able to offer it to all the local elementary schools they are please with the opportunity to be able to bring it to the Springhill Lake area and hope to continue doing so.

NEXT MEETING.

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday, June 28th. Due to a space conflict it will take place in the Administration Library on the 2nd floor of the City Hall.

ACE CALENDAR – Please let Wendy know if you are **NOT** able to attend.

Unless noted all meetings will now take place in the Second Floor City Council Room, City Municipal Building.

6/28....Regular Monthly Meeting – 7 PM

July....No Meeting

8/23....Regular Monthly Meeting – 7 PM

9/5.....Labor Day Parade